

~~CDC~~ CDC website

SENATE JUDICIARY

DC Motor Vehicle Safety Teen Drivers

Exhibit No. 2

Date: 2/17/15

Bill No. SB291

# Teen Drivers: Get the Facts

 [Share](#)

## On this Page

- [How big is the problem?](#)
- [Who is most at risk?](#)
- [What factors put teen drivers at risk?](#)
- [How can deaths and injuries resulting from crashes involving teen drivers be prevented?](#)
- [Additional Resources](#)
- [References](#)

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for U.S. teens.<sup>1</sup> Fortunately, teen motor vehicle crashes are preventable, and proven strategies can improve the safety of young drivers on the road.

## How big is the problem?

In 2011, about 2,650 teens in the United States aged 16–19 were killed and almost 292,000 were treated in emergency departments for injuries suffered in motor-vehicle crashes.<sup>1</sup> That means that seven teens ages 16 to 19 died every day from motor vehicle injuries.

Young people ages 15–24 represent only 14% of the U.S. population. However, they account for 30% (\$19 billion) of the total costs of motor vehicle injuries among males and 28% (\$7 billion) of the total costs of motor vehicle injuries among females.<sup>3</sup>

[Top of Page](#)

## Who is most at risk?

The risk of motor vehicle crashes is higher among 16- to 19-year-olds than among any other age group. In fact, per mile driven, teen drivers ages 16 to 19 are nearly three times more likely than drivers aged 20 and older to be in a fatal crash.<sup>2</sup>

Among teen drivers, those at especially high risk for motor vehicle crashes are:

- Males: In 2011, the motor vehicle death rate for male drivers and passengers ages 16 to 19 was almost two times that of their female counterparts.<sup>1</sup>
- Teens driving with teen passengers: The presence of teen passengers increases the crash risk of unsupervised teen drivers. This risk increases with the number of teen passengers.<sup>4</sup>

- Newly licensed teens: Crash risk is particularly high during the first months of licensure.<sup>5,6</sup>

Top of Page

## What factors put teen drivers at risk?

- Teens are more likely than older drivers to underestimate dangerous situations or not be able to recognize hazardous situations.<sup>7</sup>
- Teens are more likely than older drivers to speed and allow shorter headways (the distance from the front of one vehicle to the front of the next). The presence of male teenage passengers increases the likelihood of this risky driving behavior.<sup>8</sup>
- Among male drivers between 15 and 20 years of age who were involved in fatal crashes in 2012, 37% were speeding at the time of the crash<sup>9</sup> and 25% had been drinking.<sup>10</sup>
- Compared with other age groups, teens have the lowest rate of seat belt use. In 2013, only 55% of high school students reported they always wear seat belts when riding with someone else.<sup>11</sup>
- At all levels of blood alcohol concentration (BAC), the risk of involvement in a motor vehicle crash is greater for teens than for older drivers.<sup>12</sup>
- In 2012, 23% of drivers aged 15 to 20 involved in fatal motor vehicle crashes were drinking.<sup>10</sup>
  - In a national survey conducted in 2013, 22% of teens reported that, within the previous month, they had ridden with a driver who had been drinking alcohol. Among students who drove, 10% reported having driven after drinking alcohol within the same one-month period.<sup>13</sup>
  - In 2012, 71% of drivers aged 15 to 20 were killed in motor vehicle crashes after drinking and driving were not wearing a seat belt.<sup>10</sup>
  - In 2012, 49% of teen deaths from motor vehicle crashes occurred between 3 p.m. and midnight and 53% occurred on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday.<sup>2</sup>

Top of Page

## How can deaths and injuries resulting from crashes involving teen drivers be prevented?

There are proven methods to helping teens become safer drivers.

### Seat Belts

Of the teens (aged 13-19) who died in passenger vehicle crashes in 2012 approximately 55% were not wearing a seat belt at the time of the crash.<sup>14</sup> Research shows that seat belts reduce serious crash-related injuries and deaths by about half.<sup>15</sup>

### Not Drinking & Driving

Enforcing minimum legal drinking age laws and zero blood-alcohol tolerance laws for drivers under age 21 are recommended.

### **Graduated Licensing Systems (GDL)**

Driving is a complex skill, one that must be practiced to be learned well. Teenagers' lack of driving experience, together with risk-taking behavior, puts them at heightened risk for crashes. The need for skill-building and driving supervision for new drivers is the basis for graduated driver licensing systems, which exist in all US states and Washington, DC. Graduated driver licensing puts restrictions on new drivers; these are systematically lifted as the driver gains experience. Research suggests that the most comprehensive graduated drivers licensing (GDL) programs are associated with reductions of 38% and 40% in fatal and injury crashes, respectively, among 16-year-old drivers.<sup>16</sup> When parents know their state's GDL laws, they can help enforce the laws and, in effect, help keep their teen drivers safe.

### **Eight Danger Zones**

Make sure your young driver is aware of the leading causes of teen crashes:

- Driver inexperience
- Driving with teen passengers
- Nighttime driving
- Not using seat belts
  
- Distracted driving
- Drowsy driving
- Reckless driving
- Impaired driving

Learn what research has shown parents can do to keep teen driver safe from each of these risks





## Buckle Up: Restraint Use in

## MONTANA



**Keep Montana safe.**  
Encourage drivers and passengers to buckle up.

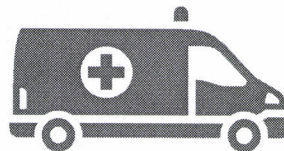
This fact sheet provides a snapshot of **motor vehicle occupant deaths and seat belt use** and an overview of proven strategies for increasing the use of seat belts, car seats, and booster seats. The information can help local public health decisionmakers and community partners see gaps and identify relevant strategies to encourage people to buckle up.

### Fast Facts

- Motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of death during the first three decades of Americans' lives.
- By wearing seat belts and properly buckling children into age- and size-appropriate car seats and booster seats, people can reduce the risk of serious injury and death in a crash by half.
- Although most drivers in the United States follow these safety measures on every trip, there are still millions who don't.
- These data show what's happening in your state.

### MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT DEATHS

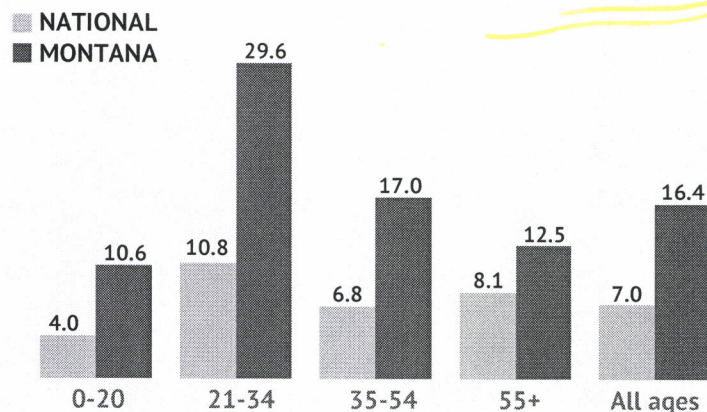
Number of Deaths, 2003–2012



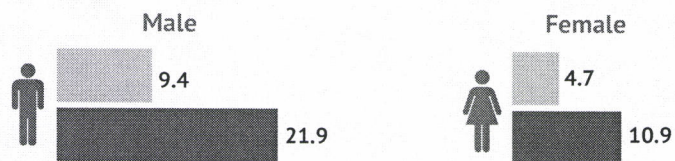
**1,890**

motor vehicle occupants were killed in Montana

### Rate of Deaths by Age (per 100,000 population), 2012



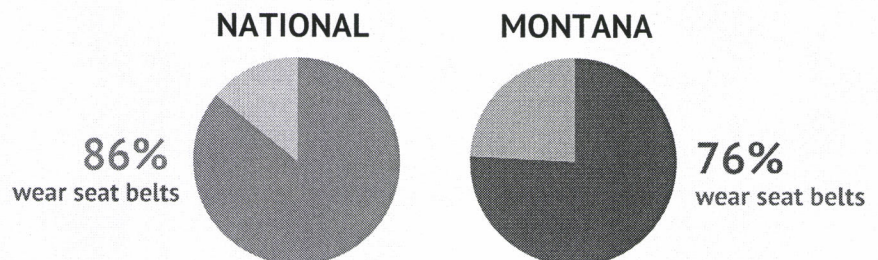
### Rate of Deaths by Gender (per 100,000 population), 2012



Source: Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS).

### RESTRAINT USE

Percentage of Drivers and Front Seat Passengers Wearing Seat Belts



Source: National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS), 2012.

Source: State Observational Survey of Seat Belt Use, 2012.



Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention  
National Center for Injury  
Prevention and Control

Working together, we can help keep people safe on the road—every day.



## MONTANA

### SEAT BELT AND CHILD RESTRAINT LAWS

- Drivers and adult front seat passengers must wear seat belts in the District of Columbia and all states except New Hampshire.
- In Montana, seat belt laws are secondary. They cover drivers, as well as passengers age 16 and older in all seats.
- Child restraint laws vary by state. For up-to-date information on these laws in your state, check with the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety at [www.iihs.org](http://www.iihs.org).



### For More Information

Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site at [www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety](http://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety) for:

- Injuries, costs, and other data on motor vehicle crashes
- Detailed information on effective strategies to improve seat belt use
- Detailed information on effective strategies to improve child passenger safety

### What Works

The strategies in this section are effective for increasing seat belt, car seat, and booster seat use. They are recommended by *The Guide to Community Preventive Services* and/or have been demonstrated to be effective in reviews by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.\* Different strategies may require different resources for implementation or have different levels of impact. Find strategies that are right for your state.

#### Strategies to increase *seat belt* use

- ⊗ **Primary seat belt laws** allow police officers to stop and ticket someone for not buckling up. On average, primary laws result in higher rates of seat belt use than **secondary seat belt laws**, which allow officers to give tickets only if they have pulled the driver over for another reason. Seat belt laws are most effective when they **cover occupants in all seats** of the vehicle.
- ⊗ **Increased penalties** for violating seat belt laws may include higher fines or points on a driver's license.
- ⊗ **Short-term, high-visibility enforcement** involves a brief period of increased police efforts including checkpoints or saturation patrols. These efforts are highly publicized through a **media campaign** that mixes both earned media coverage and paid advertisements. Combining law enforcement and media coverage is particularly effective for reaching people who typically don't use seat belts regularly, such as men, teens, and young adults.
- ⊗ **Combined nighttime enforcement programs** are short-term, highly visible enforcement strategies. They are conducted at night, when seat belt use is lowest and crashes are most common. They are combined with enforcement of other laws, such as impaired driving laws. This can help law enforcement target limited funding and resources for the greatest public safety impact.

#### Strategies to increase *car seat and booster seat* use

- ⊗ **Child restraint laws** require children riding in a car to use approved restraint devices (car seats, booster seats, or seat belts) appropriate for their age, height, and weight. Strengthening current laws with **booster seat provisions** helps reduce injuries and deaths by requiring children who have outgrown car seats to use booster seats through age 8 years or until seat belts fit properly.
- ⊗ **Enhanced enforcement programs** for child passenger safety are similar to those used for seat belt use (see above). Effective programs are short-term, highly visible in the community, and advertised widely in the media.
- ⊗ **Distribution plus education programs** help parents and caregivers get access to car seats through giveaways, loans, or low-cost rentals. They also teach the importance of car seats and how to properly use and install them.
- ⊗ **Incentive and education programs** reward parents or children with coupons or other prizes for correctly using car seats. Programs offer print materials, videos, or other instructional aids for parents and caregivers.

\*Sources: The Guide to Community Preventive Services (The Community Guide), Motor Vehicle-Related Injury Prevention, at [www.thecommunityguide.org](http://www.thecommunityguide.org), and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (2013). Countermeasures that work: a highway safety countermeasures guide for State Highway Safety Offices, 7th edition, at [www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/pdf/811727.pdf](http://www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/pdf/811727.pdf).





## Buckle Up: Restraint Use in

## COLORADO



**Keep Colorado safe.  
Encourage drivers and  
passengers to buckle up.**

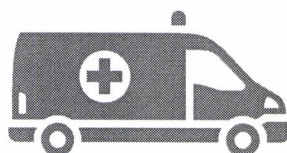
This fact sheet provides a snapshot of **motor vehicle occupant deaths and seat belt use** and an overview of proven strategies for increasing the use of seat belts, car seats, and booster seats. The information can help local public health decisionmakers and community partners see gaps and identify relevant strategies to encourage people to buckle up.

### Fast Facts

- Motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of death during the first three decades of Americans' lives.
- By wearing seat belts and properly buckling children into age- and size-appropriate car seats and booster seats, people can reduce the risk of serious injury and death in a crash by half.
- Although most drivers in the United States follow these safety measures on every trip, there are still millions who don't.
- These data show what's happening in your state.

### MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT DEATHS

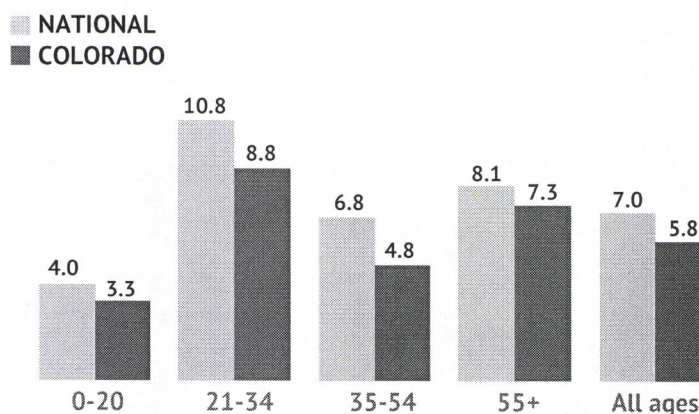
Number of Deaths, 2003–2012



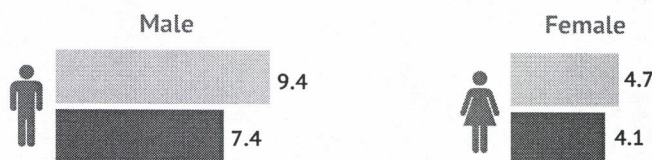
**3,879**

motor vehicle occupants  
were killed in Colorado

### Rate of Deaths by Age (per 100,000 population), 2012



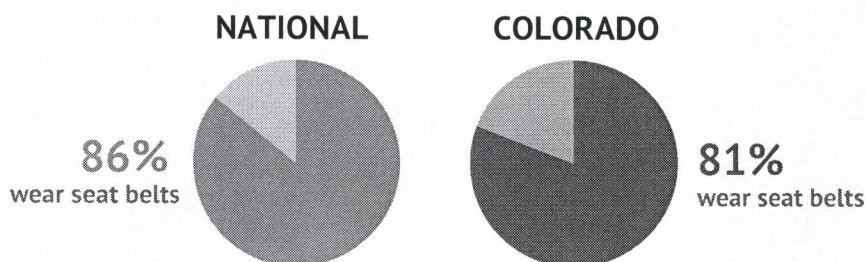
### Rate of Deaths by Gender (per 100,000 population), 2012



Source: Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS).

### RESTRAINT USE

Percentage of Drivers and Front Seat Passengers Wearing Seat Belts



Source: National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS), 2012.

Source: State Observational Survey of Seat Belt Use, 2012.



Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention  
National Center for Injury  
Prevention and Control

Working together, we can help keep people safe on the road—every day.



## COLORADO

### SEAT BELT AND CHILD RESTRAINT LAWS

- Drivers and adult front seat passengers must wear seat belts in the District of Columbia and all states except New Hampshire.
- In Colorado, seat belt laws are secondary. They cover drivers and front seat passengers age 16 and older.
- Child restraint laws vary by state. For up-to-date information on these laws in your state, check with the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety at [www.iihs.org](http://www.iihs.org).



### For More Information

Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site at [www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety](http://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety) for:

- Injuries, costs, and other data on motor vehicle crashes
- Detailed information on effective strategies to improve seat belt use
- Detailed information on effective strategies to improve child passenger safety

## What Works

The strategies in this section are effective for increasing seat belt, car seat, and booster seat use. They are recommended by *The Guide to Community Preventive Services* and/or have been demonstrated to be effective in reviews by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.\* Different strategies may require different resources for implementation or have different levels of impact. Find strategies that are right for your state.

### Strategies to increase *seat belt* use

- ⊗ **Primary seat belt laws** allow police officers to stop and ticket someone for not buckling up. On average, primary laws result in higher rates of seat belt use than **secondary seat belt laws**, which allow officers to give tickets only if they have pulled the driver over for another reason. Seat belt laws are most effective when they **cover occupants in all seats** of the vehicle.
- ⊗ **Increased penalties** for violating seat belt laws may include higher fines or points on a driver's license.
- ⊗ **Short-term, high-visibility enforcement** involves a brief period of increased police efforts including checkpoints or saturation patrols. These efforts are highly publicized through a **media campaign** that mixes both earned media coverage and paid advertisements. Combining law enforcement and media coverage is particularly effective for reaching people who typically don't use seat belts regularly, such as men, teens, and young adults.
- ⊗ **Combined nighttime enforcement programs** are short-term, highly visible enforcement strategies. They are conducted at night, when seat belt use is lowest and crashes are most common. They are combined with enforcement of other laws, such as impaired driving laws. This can help law enforcement target limited funding and resources for the greatest public safety impact.

### Strategies to increase *car seat and booster seat* use

- ⊗ **Child restraint laws** require children riding in a car to use approved restraint devices (car seats, booster seats, or seat belts) appropriate for their age, height, and weight. Strengthening current laws with **booster seat provisions** helps reduce injuries and deaths by requiring children who have outgrown car seats to use booster seats through age 8 years or until seat belts fit properly.
- ⊗ **Enhanced enforcement programs** for child passenger safety are similar to those used for seat belt use (see above). Effective programs are short-term, highly visible in the community, and advertised widely in the media.
- ⊗ **Distribution plus education programs** help parents and caregivers get access to car seats through giveaways, loans, or low-cost rentals. They also teach the importance of car seats and how to properly use and install them.
- ⊗ **Incentive and education programs** reward parents or children with coupons or other prizes for correctly using car seats. Programs offer print materials, videos, or other instructional aids for parents and caregivers.

\*Sources: The Guide to Community Preventive Services (The Community Guide), Motor Vehicle-Related Injury Prevention, at [www.thecommunityguide.org](http://www.thecommunityguide.org), and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (2013). Countermeasures that work: a highway safety countermeasures guide for State Highway Safety Offices, 7th edition, at [www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/pdf/811727.pdf](http://www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/pdf/811727.pdf).